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E.O. 12958: DECL: 11/23/2034
TAGS: [PINR](#) [SA](#)
SUBJECT: (C) SAUDI ARABIA'S PROVINCIAL GOVERNORS
(C-ME9-02325)

REF: DHAHRAN 000258

Classified By: ELISSA G. PITTERLE, DIRECTOR, INR/OPS. REASON: 1.4(C).

11. (C/NF) WASHINGTON ANALYSTS WOULD APPRECIATE ANY EMBASSY RIYADH AND CONSULATE DHAHRAN/JEDDAH REPORTING ON SAUDI ARABIA'S PROVINCIAL GOVERNORS, AS TIME AND RESOURCES PERMIT. ANALYSTS ARE PLANNING TO WRITE AN ASSESSMENT FOR THE NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL AND OTHER POLICYMAKERS ON THE ROLE OF SAUDI ARABIA'S PROVINCIAL GOVERNORS AND ON ABDALLAH'S SONS. WE ASSESS THAT KING ABDALLAH SEES THESE POSTS AS TRAINING GROUNDS FOR FUTURE NATIONAL LEADERS, AND WE ARE LOOKING TO IDENTIFY THE MOST PROMISING CANDIDATES AMONG THE CURRENT POOL OF GOVERNORS AND AMONG HIS SONS. QUESTIONS OF PARTICULAR INTEREST INCLUDE:

1A. (U) MISHAL BIN ABDALLAH

1) (C/NF) WHAT IS MISHAL BIN ABDALLAH'S EDUCATIONAL, PROFESSIONAL, AND PERSONAL BACKGROUND? WHERE WAS HE EDUCATED AND WHAT DEGREES DID HE EARN? WHAT JOB DID HE HOLD BEFORE HE BECAME GOVERNOR? HOW WELL DID HE PERFORM IN THAT JOB? PLEASE IDENTIFY HIS MOTHER, WIFE, AND HIS FULL BROTHERS. IS HE PARTICULARLY CLOSE TO ANY OF HIS BROTHERS? HOW DID THE FAMILY RECEIVE HIS APPOINTMENT?

2) (C/NF) WHAT IS MISHAL BIN ABDALLAH'S RELATIONSHIP WITH KING ABDALLAH LIKE? DOES HE REPORT TO THE SAUDI ROYAL DIWAN OR THE MINISTRY OF INTERIOR?

3) (C/NF) WHAT DOES HE HOPE TO ACCOMPLISH AS GOVERNOR? PLEASE CHARACTERIZE HIS GOALS AND WORK ETHIC. PLEASE DESCRIBE ANY ACCUSATIONS OF CORRUPTION OR UNSAVORY BEHAVIOR THAT MIGHT JEOPARDIZE HIS EFFECTIVENESS AS GOVERNOR.

4) (C/NF) WHO ARE HIS ADVISORS AND HOW DOES HE WORK WITH THEM? WHAT IS HIS RELATIONSHIP LIKE WITH OTHER SENIOR PRINCES, ESP. MINISTER OF INTERIOR NAYIF (HIS NOMINAL BOSS) AND MUHAMMAD BIN NAYIF?

5) (C/NF) WHICH FOREIGN POLICY MEASURES, PARTICULARLY YEMEN AND/OR BORDER ISSUES, IS MISHAL BIN ABDALLAH INVOLVED IN FORMULATING?

6) (C/NF) HOW RELIGIOUSLY OBSERVANT IS HE? HOW WELL DOES HE SPEAK ENGLISH? WHAT ARE HIS INTERESTS AND HOBBIES?

1B. (U) OTHER GOVERNORS

1) (C/NF) WHAT IS THE PROCESS FOR CHOOSING PROVINCIAL GOVERNORS? WHAT CRITERIA DOES KING ABDALLAH USE? WHICH CURRENT GOVERNORS DOES THE KING SEE AS LIKELY NATIONAL LEADERS IN THE FUTURE? ARE THERE ANY GOVERNORS HE PARTICULAR LIKES/DISLIKES?

2) (C/NF) WHICH AUTHORITIES MAY PROVINCIAL GOVERNORS EXERCISE WITHOUT COORDINATING WITH NATIONAL LEADERS? WHEN MUST THEY ASK PERMISSION FROM RIYADH? WHAT AUTHORITIES DO

GOVERNORS HAVE REGARDING INTERNAL SECURITY, GIVEN THE
EXTENSIVE ROLE OF THE NATIONAL MINISTRY OF INTERIOR?

3) (C/NF) HOW MUCH INTERACTION DO THE PROVINCIAL GOVERNORS
HAVE WITH WESTERN DIPLOMATS AND BUSINESS OFFICIALS?

12. (U) PLEASE CITE C-ME9-02325 IN THE SUBJECT LINE OF
REPORTING IN RESPONSE TO THE ABOVE QUESTIONS.
CLINTON